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ABSTRACT

Comprehensive educational planning can give direction to the total organization, reduce intrasystem problems, and increase the potential of the total educational system. Comprehensive educational planning is a continuous process of establishing goals, gathering data, forming and accessing alternative means of goal achievement, and making decisions about these alternatives. Although the planning process is essentially the same at the state, local education agency, and individual school level, the basic concerns and data needs are strikingly different. Primary focus of this paper is on comprehensive educational planning for the local educational agency, or "tactical" planning. Figure 1 graphically presents a model of the process and products of comprehensive educational planning. Steps in the planning process include developing the planning process strategy, developing the data information system, establishing goals for the system, suboptimizing the means of goal achievement, synthesizing plan alternatives, implementation and possible plan adjustment, and goal reassessment and possible complete replanning. (Author/JG)

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A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

A PRESENTATION AT THE AASA ANNUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 18-23, 1976
ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY

Marion J. Conrad

INTRODUCTION

PLANNING IS A TIME HONORED CONCEPT AND PROCESS. AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE TOOL, PLANNING PROVIDES THE SOMETHING EXTRA WHICH GIVES USERS A VALUABLE ADVANTAGE. HOWEVER, THE TIME IS FAST APPROACHING WHEN PLANNING WILL NO LONGER BE JUST HELPFUL BUT WILL BE A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS.

HISTORICALLY, PLANNING IN EDUCATION HAS BEEN LIMITED TO PLANNING THE ISOLATED PARTS--CURRICULUM, BUILDINGS, FINANCE, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OTHERS, ALL DIRECTED TOWARD PARTICULAR OBJECTIVES WHICH IN SOME UNEXPLAINED WAY WERE EXPECTED TO ADVANCE THE TOTAL GOALS OF THE SYSTEM. RESPECTING THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF ONE PART OF THE SYSTEM OFTEN TIMES RESULTS IN ADVERSE EFFECTS ON OTHER PARTS, CAUSING INTRA-SYSTEM COMPETITION, FRICTION, AND FRAGMENTATION. THE SUPERINTENDENT IS EXPECTED TO COORDINATE THE VARIOUS PARTS, BUT TOO FREQUENTLY SERVES AS MEDIATOR AND REFEREE BETWEEN ANTAGONISTS.

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING CAN GIVE DIRECTION TO THE TOTAL ORGANIZATION, REDUCE INTRA-SYSTEM PROBLEMS, AND INCREASE THE POTENTIAL OF THE TOTAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. BECAUSE OF ITS INTEGRAL RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COMMUNITY AGENCIES, COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING CAN ALSO BE A TREMENDOUS FORCE IN INTEGRATING OTHER COMMUNITY EFFORTS.

WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING?

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IS A CONTINOUS PROCESS OF:

1. ESTABLISHING GOALS;
2. GATHERING DATA;
3. FORMING AND ACCESSING ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT; AND
4. MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT THESE ALTERNATIVES.

EA 008 212

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IS FUTURE ORIENTED AND SHOULD CONSIDER BOTH SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE ALTERNATIVES. IT MUST BE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL AND INTEGRATE ALL FACETS OF EDUCATION WITH OTHER SOCIETAL AGENCIES. PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT AND COORDINATION ARE KEY ACTIVITIES IN THE PROCESS.

LEVELS OF PLANNING

EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY IS BASICALLY A FUNCTION OF STATE GOVERNMENT BUT THE STATES HAVE CREATED VARIOUS LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS OR SUB-SYSTEMS TO CARRY OUT THIS FUNCTION. LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN TURN HAVE ESTABLISHED VARIOUS TYPES OF SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES ALSO SUB-SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE DESIRED LEARNING EXPERIENCES. PLANNING SHOULD ACCUR AT ALL THREE LEVELS. ALTHOUGH THE PROCESS IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AT ALL LEVELS, THE BASIC CONCERNS AND DATA NEEDS ARE STRIKINGLY DIFFERENT.

BORROWING FROM THE MILITARY MODEL, PLANNING FOR THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY HAS BEEN TERMED "STRATEGIC" PLANNING; FOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY "TACTICAL" PLANNING; AND FOR THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL "OPERATIONAL" PLANNING. PLANNING AT EACH LEVEL PROVIDES SOME CONSTRAINTS BUT MUST ALSO TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE PLANNING AT THE LOWER LEVELS. EACH LEVEL OF PLANNING IS ALSO AFFECTED BY ITS MANY COORDINATE GOVERNMENTAL AND COMMUNITY SYSTEMS.

STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IS ALSO SHAPED BY INFLUENCES OUTSIDE THE STATE. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE INFLUENCES IS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. EVEN THOUGH EDUCATION IS A STATE RESPONSIBILITY AND THE FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY IS NOT A PART OF THE INTEGRATED FORMAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY, EDUCATIONAL PLANNING DOES NOT OCCUR AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AND THROUGH SPECIALIZED RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS, BY FEDERAL COURT DECISIONS, AND BY CONGRESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE OFFICE INVESTIGATIONS, THE SHAPE OF EDUCATION IS CLEARLY INFLUENCED IN SIGNIFICANT WAYS.

OUR PRIMARY FOCUS IN THIS PAPER WILL BE ON COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING FOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY OR "TACTICAL" PLANNING.

THE PLANNING MODEL

FIGURE 1 GRAPHICALLY PRESENTS THE PROCESS AND PRODUCTS OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING. IN THE MODEL, RECTANGLES ARE USED TO DESIGNATE PROCESSES, AND CIRCLES ARE USED TO DESIGNATE PRODUCTS.

DEVELOPING THE PLANNING PROCESS STRATEGY

IN THE INITIAL PHASE, THE END PRODUCTS OF THE PLANNING ENDEAVOR ARE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED AND STATED AND THE DETAILED RESOURCES--PERSONNEL, FINANCIAL, AND TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE TOTAL PLANNING PROCESS--ARE OUTLINED. THE PRODUCT OF THIS PLANNING PHASE IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE "PLAN FOR PLANNING" AND SHOULD IDENTIFY EACH MAJOR TASK, PERSONS RESPONSIBLE, RESOURCES COMMITTED, AND THE TIME ALLOTTED FOR EACH TASK. THE "PLAN FOR PLANNING" IS AN EXCELLENT TOOL FOR PROCESS EVALUATION. WITH CLEARLY DEFINED TASKS, RESOURCES, RESPONSIBILITY AND TIME LINES, IT IS POSSIBLE TO EVALUATE THE PLANNING ENDEAVOR AS IT OCCURS AND MAKE DESIRABLE MODIFICATIONS TO INSURE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INTENDED PLANNING RESULTS.

A NUMBER OF TECHNIQUES CAN BE UTILIZED IN THIS PHASE OF PLANNING. PLANNING TECHNIQUES GENERALLY REFERRED TO AS NETWORK ANALYSIS ARE MOST USEFUL. AMONG THE MANY VARIATIONS OF NETWORK ANALYSIS ARE THE CRITICAL PATH METHOD (CPM), PROGRAM EVALUATION REVIEW TECHNIQUE (PERT), FLOW OR PROCESS CHARTS, AND MILESTONE SYSTEMS. WHILE EACH TECHNIQUE HAS CERTAIN ADVANTAGES OVER OTHERS, PERT HAS HAD MORE EXTENSIVE APPLICATION TO EDUCATION THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE TECHNIQUE.

DEVELOPING THE DATE INFORMATION SYSTEM

DEVELOPING THE DATE INFORMATION SYSTEM AND ESTABLISHING GOALS FOR THE SYSTEM ARE SHOWN AS INTERACTING PHASES SINCE MUCH OF THE INITIAL DATA HAS

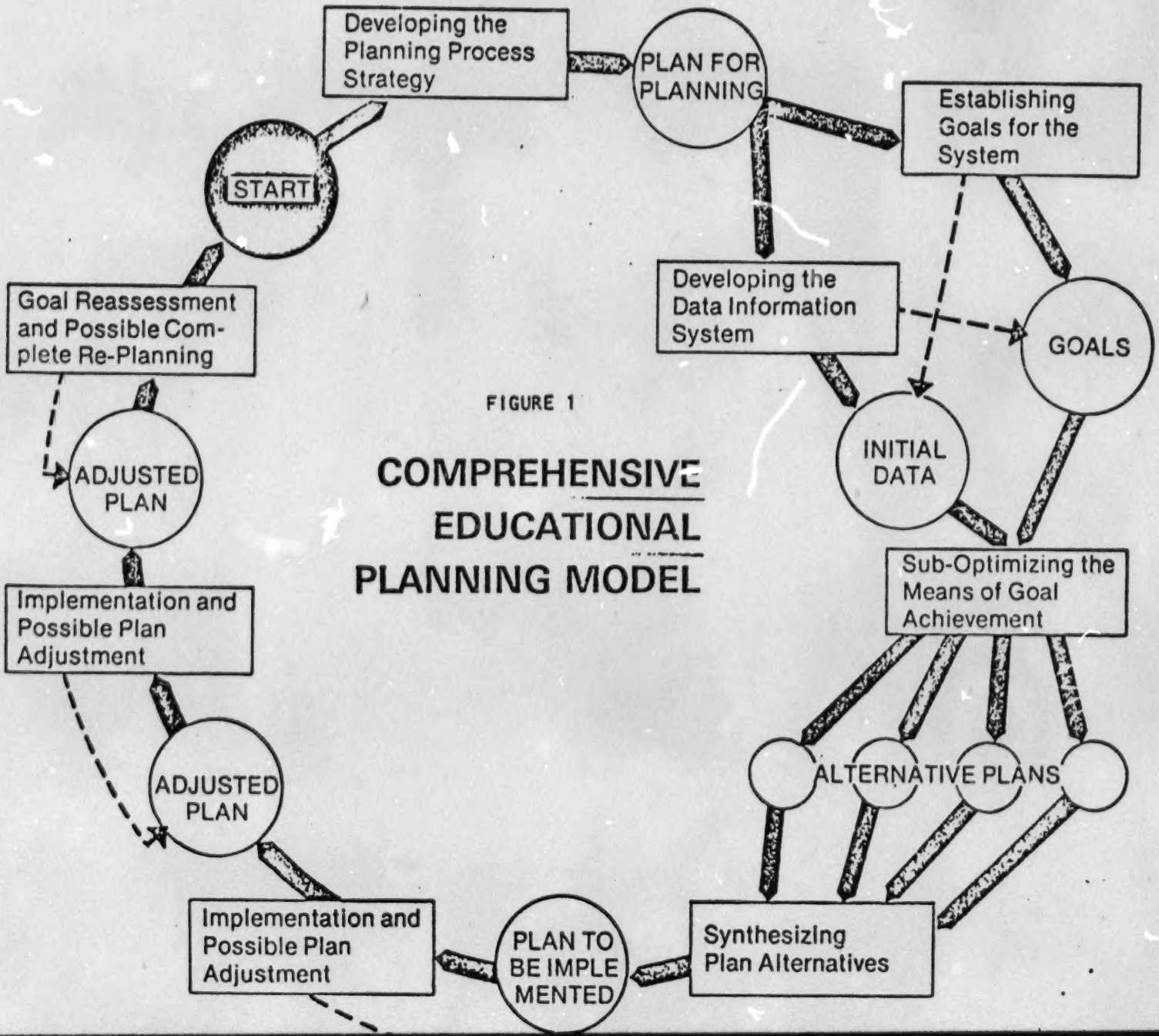


FIGURE 1

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING MODEL

DIRECT IMPLICATION FOR GOALS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GOALS AFFECTS THE KINDS OF ADDITIONAL DATA THAT NEED TO BE COLLECTED AND ANALYZED.

THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR PURPOSES OF THE PLANNING INFORMATION SYSTEM:

1. TO STORE AND RETRIEVE DATE;
2. TO GENERATE SUMMARIES;
3. TO GENERATE ALTERNATIVES; AND
4. TO EVALUATE AND SYNTHESIZE ALTERNATIVES.

FOUR PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DATA SYSTEM. FIRST, THE DATA SYSTEM MUST BE COMPREHENSIVE IN SCOPE AND DEPTH YET CONTAIN JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF DATA. TOO MUCH DATA OR THE WRONG DATA ARE ALMOST AS HARMFUL AS INSUFFICIENT DATA.

DATA MUST BE WELL ORGANIZED AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE. DATA IS USELESS IF IT CANNOT BE QUICKLY LOCATED AND PROCESSED WHEN NEEDED. IN MANY CASES, THIS SIMPLY MEANS A CAREFULLY ORGANIZED FILLING SYSTEM. IN A LARGE DISTRICT, IT IS ALMOST IMPERATIVE THAT A COMPUTER SYSTEM BE UTILIZED.

THE DATA SYSTEM MUST BE CONTINUOUSLY UP-DATED. EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO ADDING NEW DATA IS THE DISGARDING OF UNNECESSARY AND OUT-DATED INFORMATION FROM THE DATA SYSTEM.

THE FINAL PRINCIPLE IS THAT PLANNING INFORMATION MUST BE SHARED AND THE SYSTEM MUST BE WELL COORDINATED WITH OTHER DATA SYSTEMS...BOTH EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SYSTEMS.

FIGURE 2 SUMMARIZES THE VARIOUS SOURCES OF DATA FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING. EACH PLANNING LEVEL HAS INPUTS FROM ITS SUPER-SYSTEM, FROM ITS SUB-SYSTEMS, AND FROM ITS MANY COORDINATE SYSTEMS AND AGENCIES. EXAMPLES OF DATA FLOW FROM COORDINATE SYSTEMS MIGHT INCLUDE ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OR REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY, OR RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERED BY VARIOUS LOCAL AGENDIES SUCH AS CHURCHES, YMCA, OR THE CITY RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

FIGURE 2

DATA INPUTS for COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

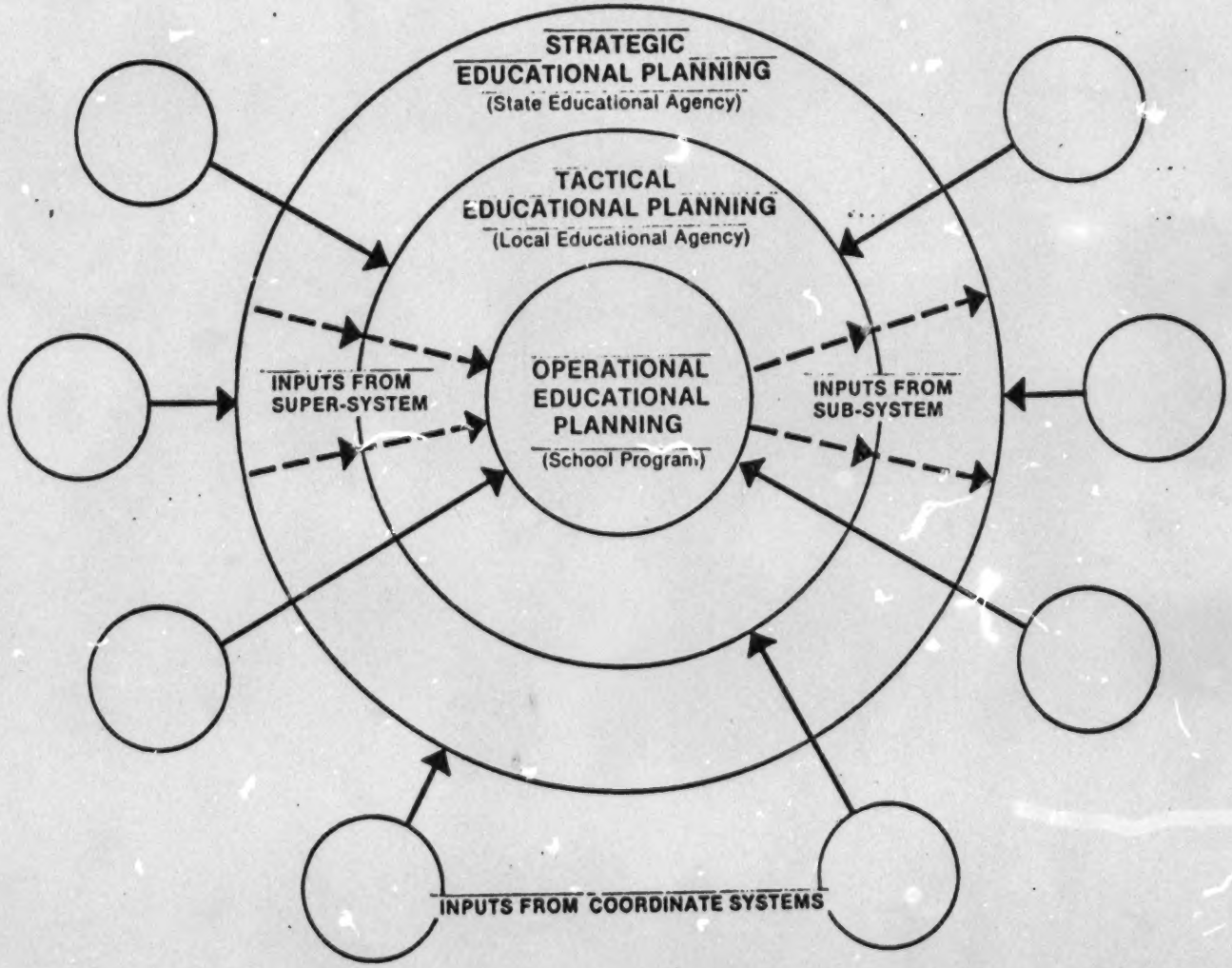


FIGURE 3

BASE DATA SYSTEM for COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

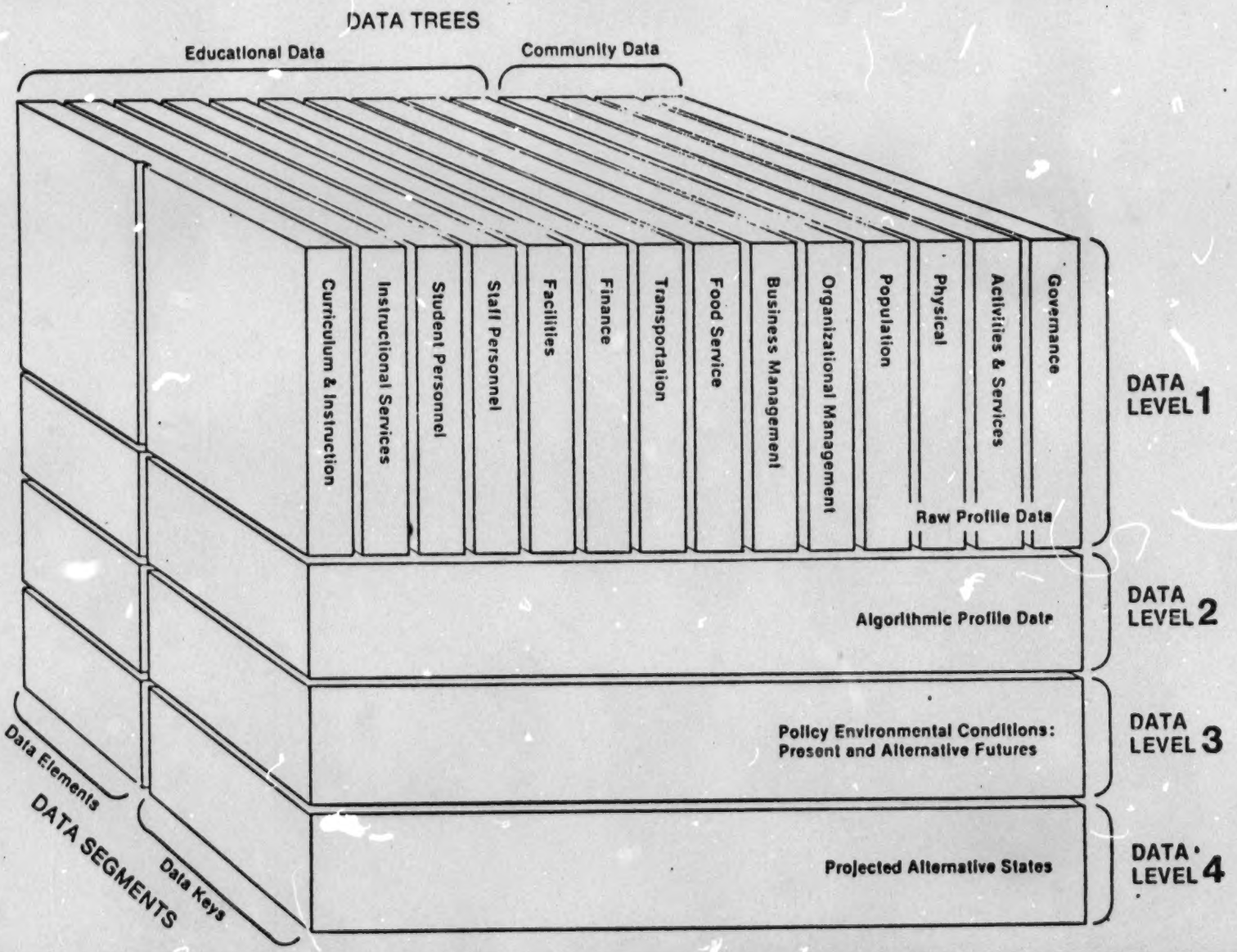


FIGURE 3 SHOWS THE MANY FACETS AND INTERRELATEDNESS OF A BASE DATA SYSTEM MODE. THE SYSTEM CONSISTS OF FOUR LEVELS OF DATA.

TEH RAW PROFILE DATA (LEVEL 1) INCLUDES MOST OF THE INITIALLY COLLECTED RAW, UNPROCESSED DATA NEEDED TO RUN THE SYSTEM. THIS LEVEL PROVIDES A PROFILE OF EACH PERSON, LEARNING ACTIVITY, RESOURCE, AND PROCESS WHICH AFFECTS THE SYSTEM.

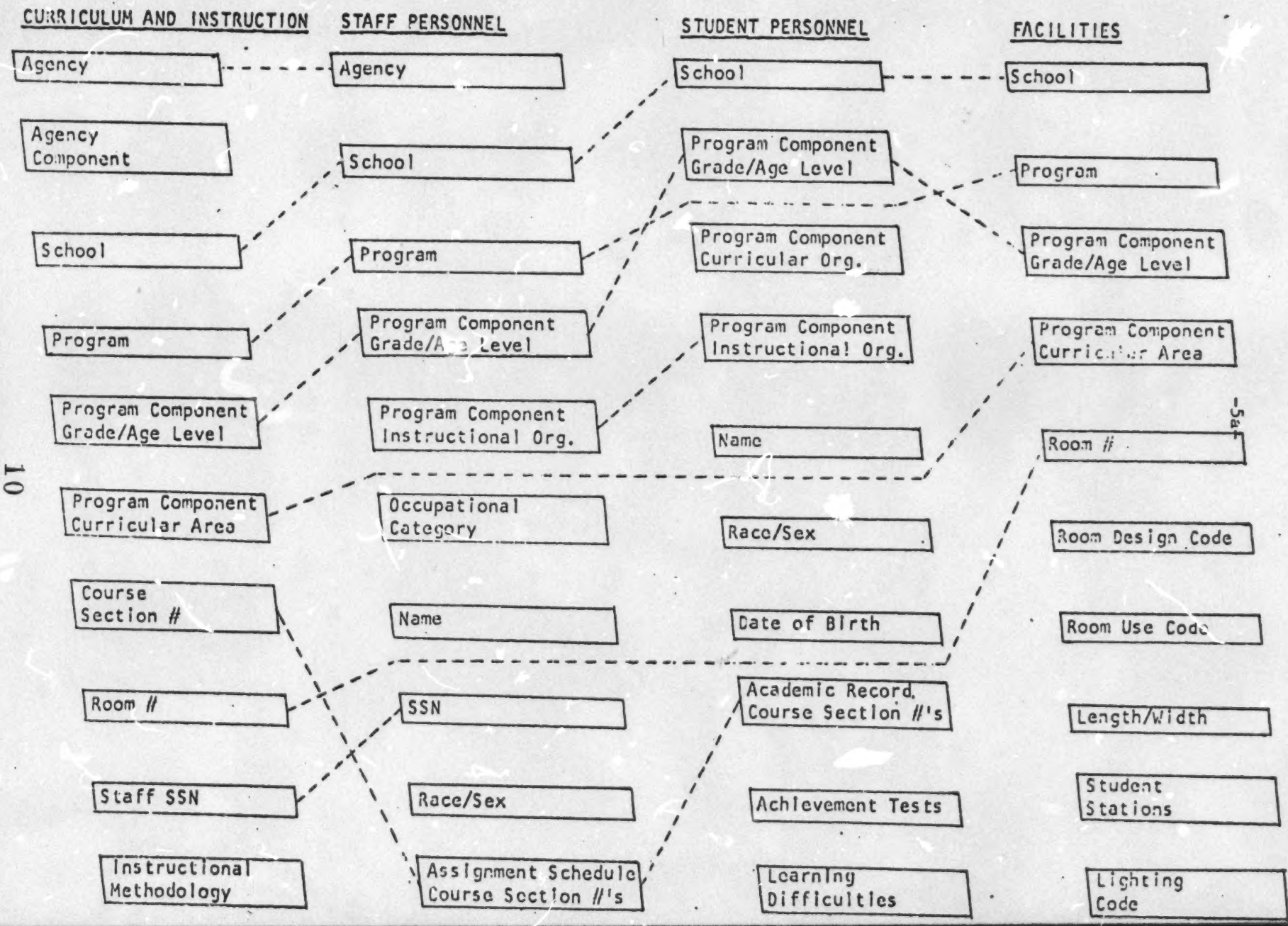
ALGORITHMIC PROFILE DATE (LEVEL 2) IS RAW PROFILE DATA CONVERTED TO MORE USEFUL FORM BY SIMPLE ALGORITHMS. MUCH OF THE ALGORITHMIC PROFILE DATA IS SIMPLY SUMMATIONS OF LEVEL 1 DATA INTO USEFUL CATEGORIES. LEVEL 2 DATA ALSO CONSISTS OF VARIOUS DATA COMPARISONS SUCH AS, STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO, OR STAFF RATIOS BY SEX OR RACE, BY SCHOOLS.

POLICY ENVIRIONMENTAL CONDITIONS (LEVEL 3) INCLUDES THOSE DATA WHICH DESCRIBE PRESENT OR ALTERNATIVE POLICIES WHICH AFFECT THE RESOURCE INPUTS AND OUTPUTS OF THE SYSTEM. EXAMPLES OF POLICY ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS MIGHT INCLUDE ENTRANCE AGE OF STUDENTS, DESIRED AVERAGE CLASS SIZE, NEGOTIATED SALARY PROVISIONS, RACIAL MIX TOLERANCE OF STUDENTS AND/OR STAFF.

PROJECTED ALTERNATIVE STATES (LEVEL 4) RESULTS FROM VARIOUS COMBINATIONS OF LEVEL 1, 2, AND 3 DATA. PROJECTED ALTERNATIVE STATES CAN OFTEN BE DERIVED BY USE OF COMPUTERS INVOLVING COMPLEX FORMULAS AND/OR SIMULATION MODELS. EXAMPLES OF PROJECTED ALTERNATIVE STATES MIGHT INCLUDE PROJECTED ROOM NEEDS UNDER VARIOUS PROGRAM POLICY CONDITIONS, PROJECTED COSTS OF VARIOUS SALARY SCHEDULE CHANGES, OR PROJECTED INCOME FROM ALTERNATIVE APPROPRIATION BILLS.

NOT ALL PROJECTED ALTERNATIVE STATES ARE DERIVED FROM RIGOROUS MATHEMATICAL CALCULATIONS OR COMPUTER SIMULATIONS. PROSE DESCRIPTIONS OF ALTERNATIVE PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT PLANNS OR ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ARE ALSO EXAMPLES OF LEVEL 4 DATA.

FIGURE 4
DATA LINKAGE AMONG DATA TREES



FOR EASIER AND QUICKER PROCESSING, THE RAW PROFILE DATA ARE ORGANIZED INTO TEN EDUCATIONAL AND FOUR COMMUNITY DATA TREES (SEE FIGURE 3). THE PRIMARY CRITERION FOR DETERMINATION OF THE DATA TREES IS TO COLLECT IN ONE TREE SIMILAR TYPES OF DATA WHICH WILL PERMIT THE GENERATION OF THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF UPPER LEVEL DATA WITHOUT GOING OUTSIDE THE TREE. HOWEVER, THE ULTIMATE NUMBER OF DATA TREES MUST BE A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN A FEW LARGE TREES AND MANY SMALL TREES BECAUSE CONSIDERABLE PROCESSING WILL BE BETWEEN AND AMONG TREES.

ALSO TO FACILITATE DATA PROCESSING, CERTAIN DATA SEGMENTS ARE DESIGNATED DATE KEYS. THE KEYS ARE USED FOR SUMMATION OF DATA WITHIN THE TREE AND ALSO FOR LINKAGE BETWEEN TREES.

FIGURE 4 SHOWS HOW THE SUMMATION KEYS ARE ORGANIZED IN A BRANCHING MANNER STARTING WITH THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WHICH IS THEN BROKEN INTO AGENCY COMPONENTS OR PLANNING AREAS WHICH IN TURN ARE COMPOSED OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS AND SO ON. THIS FIGURE ALSO SHOWS THE FUNCTION OF THE KEYS FOR DATA LINKAGE AMONG THE TREES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, THE STAFF PERSONNEL, AND THE STUDENT PERSONNEL TREES CAN BE LINKED BY THE COURSE SECTION, SO THAT DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION CAN BE CORRELATED WITH DETAILED STAFF INFORMATION, STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS, AND STUDENT OUTPUT DATA.

FIGURE 5 SHOWS THAT THE TOTAL DATA SYSTEM CONSISTS NOT ONLY OF THE BASE DATA SYSTEM BUT NUMEROUS REPORTS GENERATED FROM THE BASE SYSTEM AND REPORTS FROM OTHER SYSTEMS AND AGENCIES. THESE REPORTS MAY BE IN A VARIETY OF FORMS -- SOME MAY ACTUALLY BE STORED IN A COMPUTER, SUBJECT TO CALL-UP ON A CATHODE RAY TUBE, OTHERS IN PROSE, AND STILL OTHERS IN MAP OR CHART FORM. THIS FIGURE ALSO ILLUSTRATES THAT CERTAIN DATA ELEMENTS ARE SOMETIMES EXTRACTED FROM THE REPORTS OF OTHER AGENCIES AND BECOME INTEGRAL PARTS OF THE BASE DATA SYSTEM OF THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.

ESTABLISHING THE GOALS OF THE SYSTEM

ESTABLISHING THE GOALS OF THE SYSTEM MAY WELL BE THE MOST ELUSIVE, YET THE MOST CHALLENGING IN THE ENTIRE PLANNING PROCESS. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WELL-DEFINED GOALS BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE PLANNING CAN PROCEED. IF THE GOALS ARE NOT CREATED ACCORDING TO IMPORTANCE OR RESOURCE PRIORITY, THEY MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A BRIEF STATEMENT OR OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE WHICH WILL PERMIT DECISION-MAKING WHEN GOAL CONFLICT ARISES IN PLANNING OR IMPLEMENTATION. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT GOALS BE FURTHER DEFINED INTO MORE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES WHICH CAN BE MEASURED.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF GOAL SETTING, BUT UNTIL RECENTLY LITTLE HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THE SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES. TWO OF THE BETTER TECHNIQUES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED BY THE COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING OF PHI DELTA KAPPA AND BY THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCED STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON.

SUB-OPTIMIZING THE MEANS OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

SUB-OPTIMIZING THE MEANS OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT IS THE HEART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS. THE QUALITY OF THE FINAL PRODUCT OF THE PLANNING PROCESS WILL, IN LARGE PART, BE DETERMINED BY THE ABILITY OF PLANNERS TO CREATE VIABLE ALTERNATIVES FROM WHCH THE FINAL PLAN CAN BE SYNTHESIZED. EACH BASIC PLAN MUST HAVE A BASIC STRATEGY BY WHICH GOALS CAN BE ACHIEVED AND A SERVICE SYSTEM TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN.

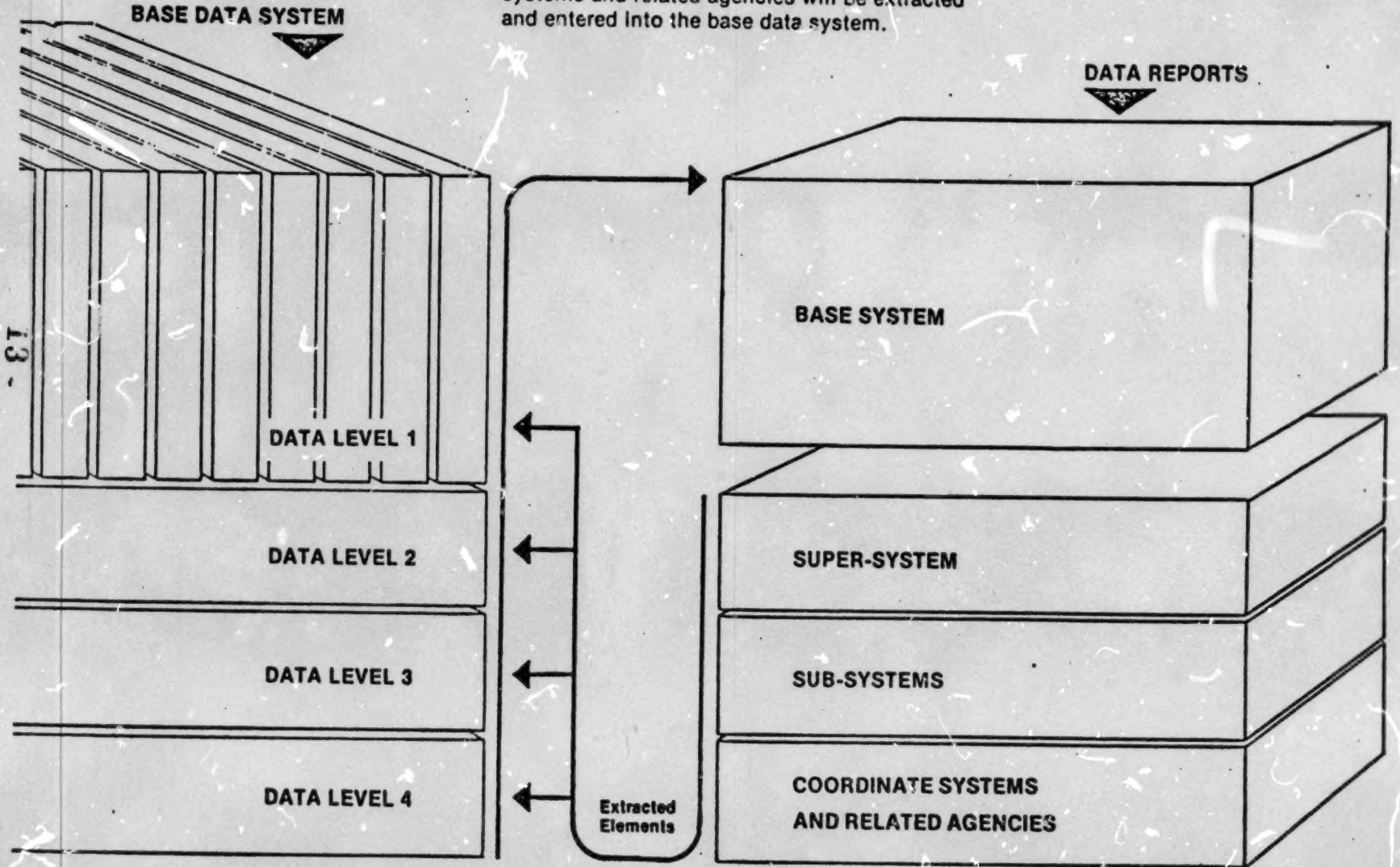
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEARNING PROGRAM AND THE SUPPORT SERVICES IS OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD. IN LARGE SCHOOL SYSTEMS, THE SUPPORT SERVICES OFTENTIMES TEND TO BECOME ENDS RATHER THAN MEANS. THE LEARNING PROGRAM IS THE ONLY JUSTIFICATION FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND ITS SERVICE SYSTEM COMPONENTS.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT AS ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS ARE GENERATED, ALTERNATIVE SERVICE SYSTEMS ARE MORE APPROPRIATE FOR ONE ALTERNATIVE THAN ANOTHER. IN FACT, IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSESS SERVICE SYSTEM

FIGURE 5

TOTAL DATA SYSTEM for COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Some of the data from the reports of other systems and related agencies will be extracted and entered into the base data system.



ALTERNATIVES WITHOUT THEIR DIRECT TIE TO A LEARNING PROGRAM.

THE ACCOMPANYING MILESTONE CHART FOR A PROJECTED COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING PROJECT (FIGURE 6) WILL HELP ILLUSTRATE THE COMPLEXITY OF THIS PHASE OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING -- ESPECIALLY IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE OTHER PLANNING PHASES. MILESTONES 23 THROUGH 93 ARE ALL RELATED TO THIS SUB-OPTIMIZING PHASE OF PLANNING.

A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES HAVE BEEN USED TO GENERATE ALTERNATIVES. BRAINSTROMING HAS PROBABLY BEEN ON OF THE MOST OFTEN USED TECHNIQUES. THE ADVOCATE TEAM, A MORE RECENT TECHNIQUE INVOLVING A VARIETY OF PERSONS HAS PROVED MOST BENEFICIAL TO OVERCOME TIME CONSTRAINTS. PROBABLY THE MOST EXCITING NEW TECHNIQUE FOR GENERATING ALTERNATIVES IS THE COMPUTER SIMULATION MODEL.

SYNTHESIZING PLAN ALTERNATIVES

SYNTHESIZING PLAN ALTERNATIVES REQUIRES DECISION-MAKERS TO CONSIDER THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE COMPONENTS AND BLEND THEM INTO THE ULTIMATE PLAN TO BE IMPLEMENTED. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS PHASE BE SEEN AS A SYNTHESIS PROCESS RATHER THAN A PROCESS OF CHOOSING ONE ALTERNATIVE OVER ANOTHER. OFTENTIMES, THE SYNTHESIS PROCESS BRINGS ABOUT STILL ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES WHICH MAY BE A SYNTHESIS OF TWO OR MORE INITIAL ALTERNATIVES.

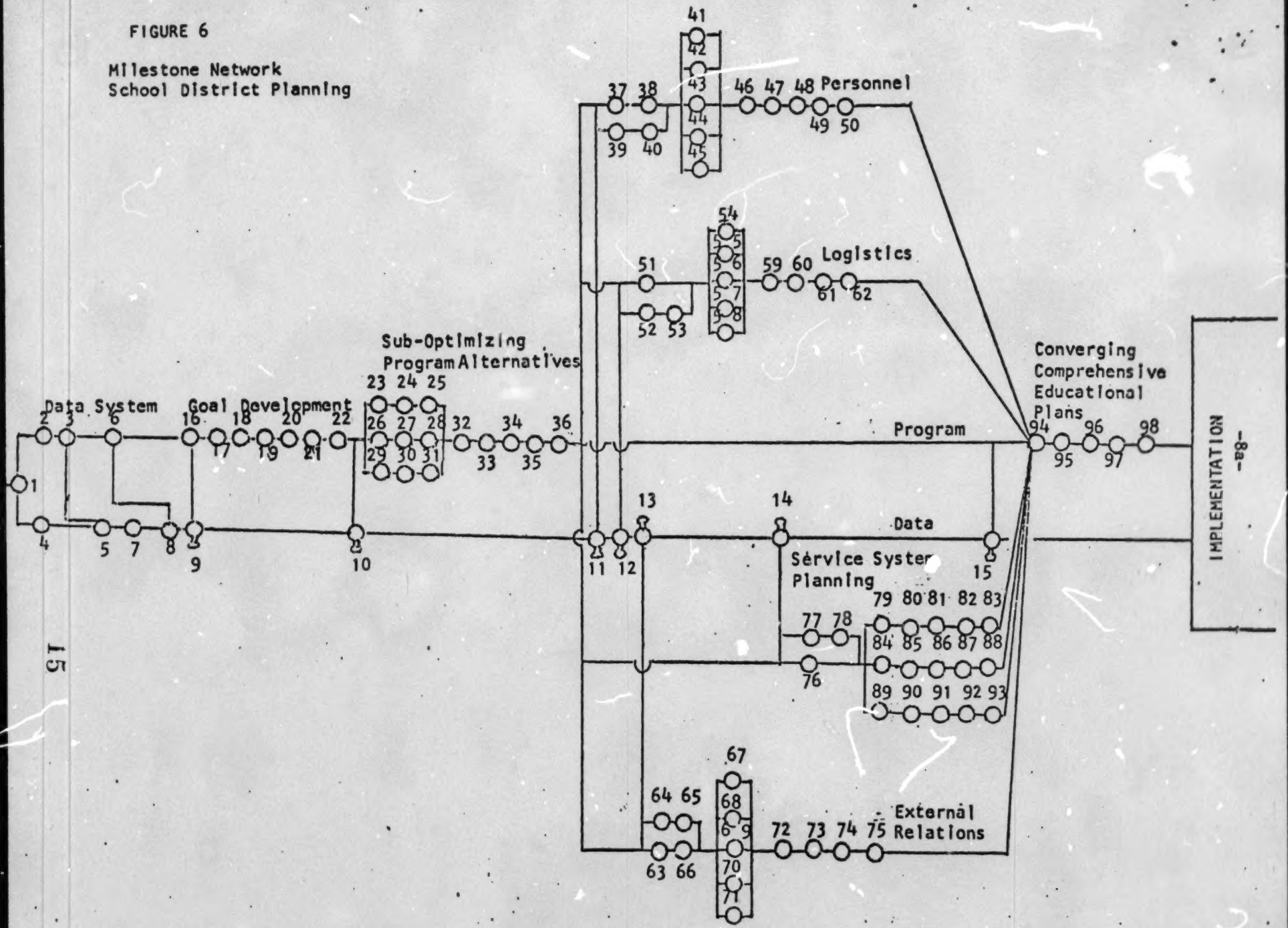
THIS IS PROBABLY THE MOST CRITICAL PHASE FOR TOTAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. BEFORE THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED DECISION-MAKERS ARE CALLED UPON TO MAKE DECISION, THEY SHOULD HAVE AMPLE ASSESSMENT DATA FROM THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE TOTAL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING NOT ONLY LAY PERSONS BUT ALSO FROM STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF. COMPUTER PROGRAMS ARE ALSO BEING DEVELOPED TO HELP IN HTE ASSESSMENT OF VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES.

IMPLEMENTATION AND POSSIBLE PLAN ADJUSTMENT

WHILE IMPLEMENTATION IS NOT A FORMAL PHASE OF THE PLANNING PROCESS,

FIGURE 6

Milestone Network
School District Planning



IT MUST OCCUR BEFORE THE PLAN ADJUSTMENT PHASE IS UNDERTAKEN. AS IMPLEMENTATION GETS UNDERWAY, PRODUCT EVALUATION PROCEDURES MUST BE INITIATED IN ORDER TO PROVIDE DATA FOR DECISION-MAKING ABOUT PLAN ADJUSTMENTS. THIS PHASE IS QUITE SIMILAR TO THE SUB-OPTIMIZING PHASE SINCE ADDITIONAL DATA INCLUDING PRODUCT EVALUATION DATA WILL SUGGEST PLAN ADJUSTMENT ALTERNATIVES. THIS PHASE OPERATES ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE GOALS FOR THE SYSTEM ARE STILL VALID AND PLAN ADJUSTMENTS ARE NEEDED TO BETTER MEET THE ESTABLISHED GOALS.

GOALS REASSESSMENT AND POSSIBLE COMPLETE REPLANNING

WHILE THE PLAN ADJUSTMENT PHASE NEED NOT INVOLVE EVERY PHASE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT GOAL REASSESSMENT BE INITIATED PERIODICALLY SO THAT THE COMPLETE PLANNING PROCESS CAN BE RECYCLED SHOULD BE THE GOAL REASSESSMENT INDICATE THE DESIRABILITY OF DOING SO. A COMMON PROBLEM AMONG ORGANIZATIONS IS THAT OF REMAINING RELEVANT. PERIODIC GOAL REASSESSMENT IS ESSENTIAL TO INSURE CONTINUING RELEVANCE.

EVALUATION AND PLANNING

EVALUATION HAS NOT BEEN INCLUDED AS A PHASE IN THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING MODEL BECAUSE IT PERMEATES MUCH OF THE PLANNING PROCESS. FIRST, THERE MUST BE CONTINOUS EVALUATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS IN ORDER THAT THE PROCESS MAY BE MODIFIED AND IMPROVED AS PLANNING GOES FORWARD. SECOND, THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLAN, THE PRODUCT OF PLANNING PROCESS, MUST BE EVALUATED. FINALLY, AN EVALUATION SYSTEM IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF ANY COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLAN IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE OUTCOMES WHICH THE PLAN IS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE.

PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT AND PLANNING

THE PROCESS OF PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT BOTH LAY AND PROFESSIONALS, ALSO PERMEATES MUCH OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS AND SOME DISCUSSION SEEMS APPROPRIATE AT THIS POINT. MANY PERSONS WILL BE

INVOLVED IN PROVIDING BASELINE DATA WHICH WILL BE COLLECTED FROM INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZED GROUPS AND AGENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY.

THE PLANNING MODEL REQUIRES TOTAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DELINEATING GOALS AND SETTING PRIORITIES. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES FOR MEETING THE GOALS SHOULD REST PRIMARILY UPON THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF, ALTHOUGH OTHERS MIGHT WELL BE INVOLVED. ULTIMATELY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TOTAL COMMUNITY SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN ASSESSING THESE ALTERNATIVES AND PROVIDING INPUT DATA FOR FINAL DECISION-MAKING.

AN INTERESTING PARTICIPATORY MODEL HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FOR TOTAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PLANNING. THE MODEL CONSISTS OF FIVE DIFFERENT REPRESENTATIVE ADVISORY GROUPS CALLED PACTS. PACTS IS AN ACRONYM FOR PARENTS, ADMINISTRATORS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS.

WHILE PACTS GROUPS PARTICIPATE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, THE BASIC STRATEGY CALLS FOR THEM TO MEET INDEPENDENTLY TO MAXIMIZE THEIR DIFFERENTIAL INPUTS. EACH GROUP INDEPENDENTLY ASSESSES ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICE SYSTEM COMPONENTS, THEN REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH GROUP MEET TO CONVERGE THEIR THINKING INTO A COMPOSITE ADVISORY REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION. THESE PACTS GROUPS MEET OFTEN THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING PROCESS TO CONSIDER EACH MAJOR COMPONENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL PLAN.